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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,952	07/07/2003	Gaku Takano	065905-0305	6603
22428	7590	06/14/2007	EXAMINER	
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP			SAFAIPOUR, HOUSHANG	
SUITE 500				
3000 K STREET NW			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
WASHINGTON, DC 20007			2625	
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			06/14/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/612,952	TAKANO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Houshang Safaipour	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 7-15 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 07 July 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.



Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/7/03.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant Admitted Prior Art (AAPA), and further in view of Eschbac (US 2004/0013317).

Regarding claim 1, AAPA discloses a multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP), comprising:

a system controller (160, fig. 1) communicatively coupled to a network (190), the system controller configured to receive a network image processing job sent over the network by a network requesting device and configured to control operation of the MFP [0002];

an image recorder (130) configured to receive image data and print documents using the image data;

a scanner (110) configured to scan a document and provide scan data as a result;

an image processor (120) communicatively coupled with the scanner and configured to receive the scan data from the scanner, to perform image processing on the scan data to provide image-processed data, and to output the image-processed data to the image recorder [0006]; and

an interface unit (140) configured to transfer image data between the image processor and the system controller in a first mode of operation of the MFP, wherein the image processor comprises:

Applicant in describing the background of the inventions refers to JP 10-269044 and discloses that "...10-269044 can not process image data received over the network and send it back over a network in a simple and direct manner, without passing the data through several MFP components..." Eschbach discloses an image processing (IPU, fig. 1) that "can send digital image data to and receive digital image data from any network(s) to which is connected." (fig. 1, paragraph [0014]), therefore bypassing any interface unit. Eschbach further discloses that the IPU is coupled to different storage medium for processing the image data [0015]. Therefore it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine teachings of Eschbach with that of AAPA for enabling faster exchange of information between the image processing unit and different network(s).

Regarding claim 2, AAPA discloses the MFP according to claim 1, further comprising: a first memory (150) communicatively coupled to the interface unit (140), the first memory configured to temporarily store image data, and to provide the image data to the image processor in the first mode of operation of the MFP (fig. 1).

Regarding claim 3, AAPA discloses the MFP according to claim 2, further comprising: a second memory (170) communicatively coupled to the system control unit (160), the second memory configured to temporarily store image-processed data that has been scanned by the scanner and that has been image processed by the image processing unit in the first mode of operation (fig. 1).

Regarding claims 4 and 6, data clocking in and out of storage during a clock cycle is well known and routinely implemented in the art as evidenced by US 2004/0042474 and US 5,233,335. Therefore it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to implement such practice in AAPA's MFP.

Regarding claim 5, AAPA discloses the MFP according to claim 3, wherein said second memory is capable of storing image-processed data that has been received over said network by said system controller and that has been image processed by said image processor [0005].

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7-10 are allowed. The prior art does not disclose an image processing method for a multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP) that is coupled to a network, the method comprising: a) receiving a local image processing request, the local image processing request not being received by way of the network; b) processing the local image processing request; c) receiving a network image processing request sent over the network while the MFP is processing the local image processing request; d) denying the network image processing request; e) completing the local image processing request started in step b); and f) placing the MFP in a mode that is capable of accepting a new processing request, wherein the new processing request may be either another local image processing request, the network image processing request denied in step d), or another network image processing request.

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Claims 11-15 are allowed. The prior art does not discloses an image processing method for a multi-function image processing apparatus (MFP) that is coupled to a network, the method comprising: a) receiving a network image processing request sent over a network; b) processing the network image processing request; c) receiving a local image processing request, not sent over the network, while the network image processing request is still being processed; d) temporarily halting processing of the network image processing request; e) processing the local image processing request to completion; and f) continuing processing of the network image processing job request from a point where the network image processing request was halted in step d).

Contact information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Houshang Safaipour whose telephone number is (571)272-7412. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. from 6:00am to 2:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Moore can be reached on (571)272-7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Houshang Safaipour
Patent examiner
June 9, 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Houshang Safaipour", is positioned above the typed name and title.